### **NEWS**

# From the County of San Bernardino Josie Gonzales Fifth District

www.sbcounty.gov/gonzales

**JUNE 14, 2012** 



JGFDS-PR-280-CHAIR FOCUSES ON COUNTYWIDE PRIORITIES DURING BUDGET TALKS FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT LISHA SMITH AT (909) 387-4565

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Chair Focuses On Countywide Priorities During Budget Talks

**SAN BERNARDINO** – When the Board of Supervisors meets Friday to consider adoption of the county's budget for Fiscal Year 2012-13, Chair Josie Gonzales plans to move the board towards addressing key priorities while closing a multi-million dollar deficit.

The proposed \$4.06 billion budget that will be discussed closes a \$33.2 million deficit for FY 12-13, and is another step forward in meeting the county's goal of closing a \$91.5 million structural deficit through 2015-16.

"As Chair, it is my responsibility to build consensus amongst the board members to deliver a fair and balanced budget," said Gonzales.

"Last year we established a 5-year plan to systematically close the deficit. Despite declining revenues and chaos in Sacramento, the county continues to meet its obligations while reigning in spending. The simple fact is, if the money isn't there then we have to adjust our spending to match revenues," she added.

In review of the budget, Gonzales has identified several key priorities that must be addressed for the benefit the entire county:

- \$3.8 million in one-time funding for Land Use Services;
- \$5 million in one-time funding for the Pavement Management Program;
- \$5.8 million in AB 109 funding for county jails (Sheriff's Department); and
- \$20 million in ongoing funding to upgrade the 800MHz public safety radio system.

-more-

### **Supporting Business**

The \$3.8 million in one-time funds for Land Use Services includes:

- \$2.3 million to update the county General Plan and Development Code;
- \$700,000 to update permitting software; and
- \$360,000 to combat the illegal operation of unpermitted medical marijuana. dispensaries.

"In order to spur growth in the private sector we have to invest in infrastructure, and update and streamline the permit approval process. The county is prepared to invest \$2.3 million to enhance our General Plan to create jobs and grow the economy," said Chair Gonzales. "Reducing unemployment has to be a priority for the board."

The proposed Land Use Services improvements align perfectly with the County Vision, specifically the recent adoption by the County Board and the San Bernardino Associated Government Board to implement goals to create an improved, sustainable business environment.

#### **Public Safety**

Support for public safety remains a priority for Chair Gonzales. The proposed budget allocates \$5.8 million in AB 109 funds to the Sheriff's Department to offset the increasing costs of housing inmates in county jails. Additionally, the proposed budget allocates \$20 million towards the 800 MHz radio system used by law enforcement and fire departments throughout the county.

"There are no other items in this budget more important than the funding for our county jails and the 800 MHz system," said Gonzales.

"Realignment has shifted a huge burden onto the counties to house inmates for longer periods of time," she said. "We have to ensure that our Sheriff's Department has the resources needed to serve the growing inmate population."

Lastly, Gonzales defends the 800 MHz radio system as one of the most important pieces of infrastructure that exists in our county. "All of the county's police and fire departments rely on the 800 MHz system to communicate with one another, but the system is woefully outdated. Knowing our county's susceptibility to fires, floods and earthquakes, we cannot ignore the high probability of our emergency communication system failing during a disaster," said the Chair.

In agreement, County Sheriff Rod Hoops has stated to the Chair that upgrading San Bernardino County's 800 MHz system is critical to public safety.

"I will not waiver in my belief that funding the 800 MHz upgrade is essential to this county, and I will not allow this matter to be put on the back burner," said Chair Gonzales.